

San Carlos-Safford-Duncan Watershed Group

2001 Activity Report



The Mission of the San Carlos-Safford-Duncan Watershed is to improve watershed health and water quality of the Upper Gila River through locally led efforts.

The San Carlos-Safford-Duncan Watershed is comprised of that part of the Upper Gila River Watershed from Coolidge Dam to the Arizona-New Mexico border. It includes about 6,000 square miles of land, which 17% is privately owned and the remainder is under the stewardship of state, federal and tribal governments.





Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) granted \$33,200 in funding through the 319h program. Funds were used to improve water quality through a series of sediment trap structures in the San Simon Watershed. Total cost \$61,400. Completed October, 1999.



Americorp* NCCC and Boy Scouts of America provided volunteer labor in exchange for education on watershed conservation.

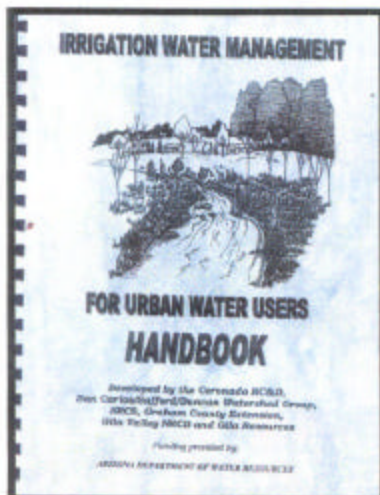


Wettie Waterdrop encourages water conservation at County Fairs and community events.

Water Quality and Quantity Projects

A series of twelve "Water Tip" cards were designed and distributed with the Coronado RC&D newsletter to promote water quality and conservation practices in the Gila Basin.

- What Do You Know About Water?
- Be Smart! Use Water Wisely and You'll Save Money!!!
- Conserving Water Is Easy Once You Know How...
- The Process of Water Treatment
- Water Detective Quiz!
- Practical Tips For Clean Water
- Lawn Watering Guide
- Home Water Conservation Tips
- Water Smart Gardening & Landscaping Tips
- The Fine Art of Lawn Watering
- You Can Be A Water Leak Detective!
- Q and A About the Water You Drink



A \$50,000 grant from the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) was used to kick off a water conservation program in urban areas of the watershed. Completed January, 2001.



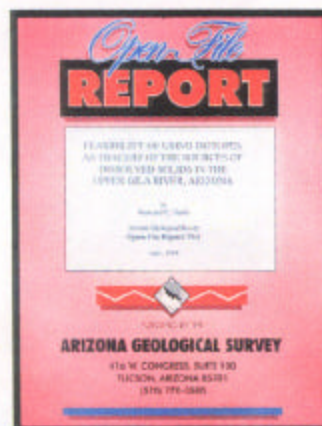
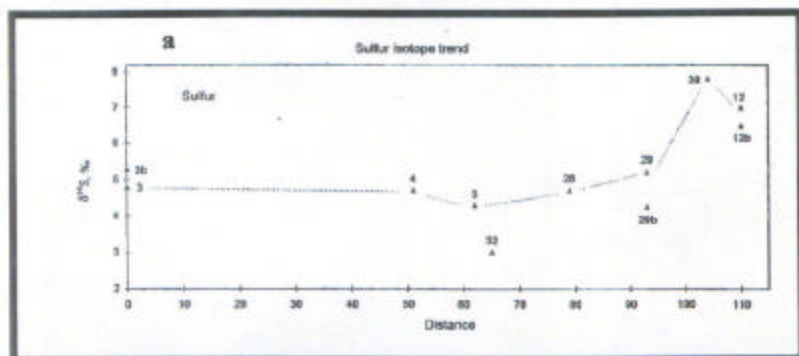
In the summer of 2000 SSD partners led by Gila Valley Irrigation District Engineer Jerry Matlock implemented a pilot project to control erosion on rural roads in Graham County. The County provided materials and transport, local ranchers and SSD members provided labor. Cost and labor information from this project was used as a basis for the Road Rehabilitation project funded by ADEQ in 2000.



Endangered species such as the Willow Fly Catcher are a part of life in the Gila Valley. Volunteers attended an informative workshop in Phoenix to learn more about the needs and habits of this species.



The SSD Watershed Group adopted a project to assist local farmers in rehabilitating Lebanon Reservoir after it was declared unsafe. A \$50,000 grant from NRCS provided funds for an engineering study and design. Funds are currently being sought to repair the dam.



Ray Harris of the Arizona Geological Survey continues extensive work in the Gila Valley assessing the isotopes found in river water. Research has been funded in part by the Arizona Water Protection fund and a preliminary report was published in 1999.



The control of noxious and invasive weeds is a high priority to the local watershed group. Members have been active in research, education and legislation to address Euryops, an introduced species that has colonized Frye Mesa above Thatcher. The plant has no forage or wildlife value and has overtaken areas at the expense of native plants.



Multiple partners have been working together to conduct a fluvial geomorphology study of the Gila River from the New Mexico to the San Carlos Nation Border. The Bureau of Reclamation is conducting the study with additional funding support from an Arizona Water Protection Fund Grant of \$450,000. Local watershed partners, Graham County, BLM, NRCS, Gila Valley NRCD, Phelps Dodge Mining, Greenlee County and Coronado RC&D have contributed an additional \$250,000.



Erosion of ranch roads along the San Simon River contributes large quantities of sediment that degrades water quality. A project to rehabilitate a high priority section of road received a \$61,400 grant of ADEQ 319 funds with work to begin in 2001. Local contributions from ranchers, Gila Valley Natural Resource Conservation District, Coronado RC&D and Graham County total \$40,420 with an equal amount of technical assistance provided by the Bureau of Land Management.



Thatcher High School Research team led by Coronado RC&D Educational Consultant, Dave Henson, monitor turbidity as part of an ADEQ 319 funded project on Aravaipa Creek. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is providing technical assistance and oversight to the upland treatment phase of the project.

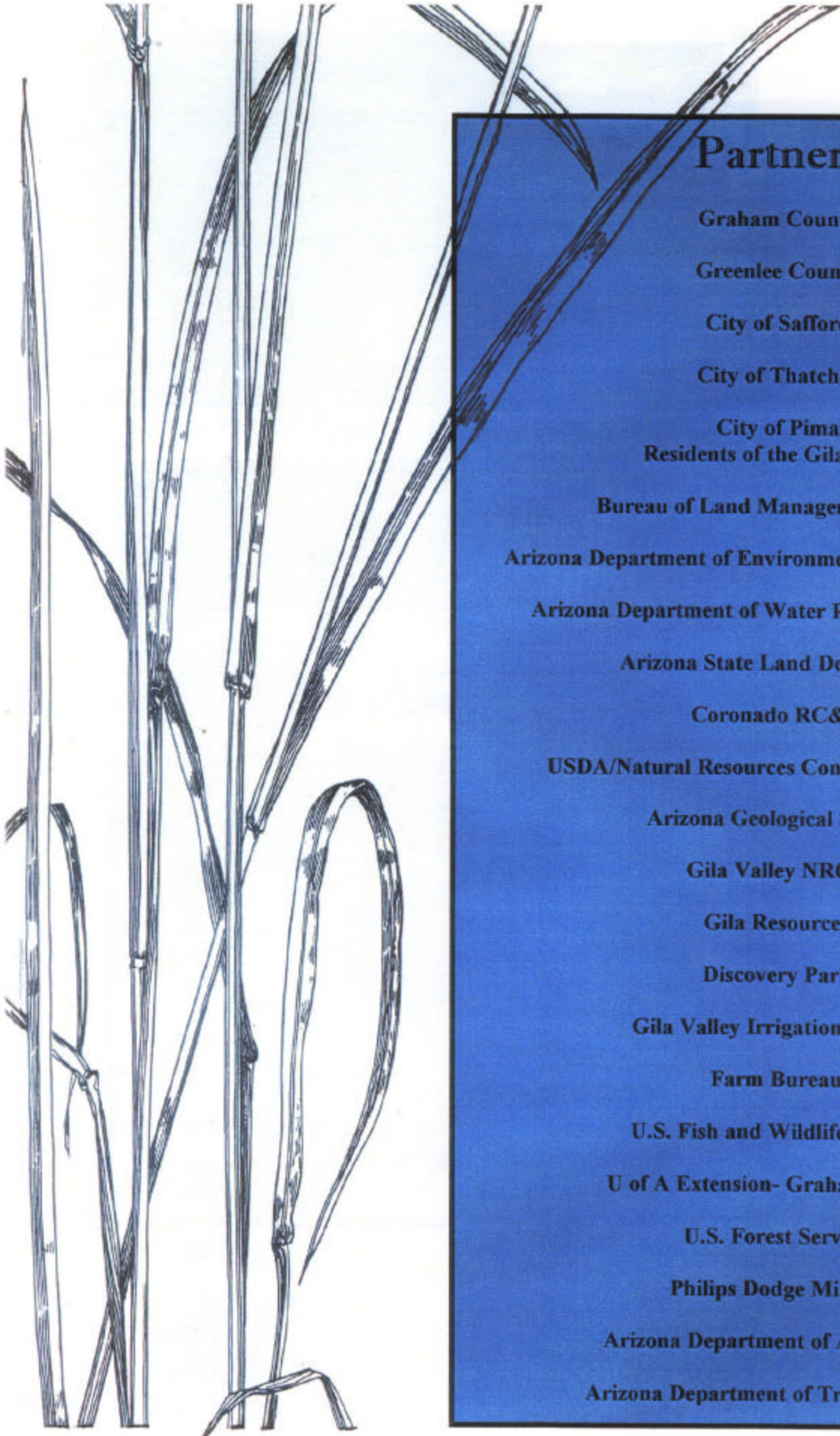


In two separate grants from the Arizona Water Protection Fund, two high priority wells discharging saline water into the Gila River were sealed. Total value of grants and local contributions were as follows:

Thatcher Hot Well –
Total Grant - \$115,340
AWPF - \$113,360
Local Match - \$1,980

Bellman Well –
Total Grant - \$347,820
AWPF - \$333,790
Local Match - \$14,030





Partners

Graham County

Greenlee County

City of Safford

City of Thatcher

City of Pima
Residents of the Gila Valley

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)

Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR)

Arizona State Land Department

Coronado RC&D

USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service

Arizona Geological Survey

Gila Valley NRCD

Gila Resources

Discovery Park

Gila Valley Irrigation District

Farm Bureau

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U of A Extension- Graham County

U.S. Forest Service

Philips Dodge Mining

Arizona Department of Agriculture

Arizona Department of Transportation